Claims

1.   A method of transmitting a plurality of data items, comprising the steps of:

transmitting a field indicating the number of data items;

transmitting the plurality of data items, each item including an identifier;

5   characterized in that the plurality of identifiers form an ordered sequence, and in that the field indicating the number of data items comprises a first and a second subfield, said subfields representing the range of said sequence of identifiers.

2.   A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the subfields are modulo-N numbers, where N is the maximum number of data items.

10   3.   A method as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the data items constitute information about television programmes to be broadcast.

4.   A method of receiving and processing a plurality of data items from a transmitter, comprising the steps of:

receiving a field indicating the number of data items;

15   receiving the plurality of data items, each item including an identifier;

comparing the number of received data items with the number indicated by the received field to determine whether all data items have been received;

characterized in that the field indicating the number of data items comprises a first and a second subfield, said subfields representing the range of an ordered sequence of

20   identifiers, the method further comprising the step of checking whether and which identifiers within said range are missing so as to determine which data items have not yet been received.

5.   A method as claimed in claim 4, wherein the subfields are modulo-N numbers, where N is the maximum number of data items.

25   6.   A method as claimed in claim 4 or 5, wherein the data items constitute information about television programmes to be broadcast.

7.   A transmitter for transmitting a plurality of data items, comprising:

means for transmitting a field indicating the number of data items;

means for transmitting the plurality of data items, each item including an identifier;

characterized in that the plurality of identifiers form an ordered sequence, and in that the field indicating the number of data items comprises a first and a second subfield,

5   said subfields representing the range of said sequence of identifiers.

8.   A transmitter as claimed in claim 7, wherein the subfields are modulo-N numbers, where N is the maximum number of data items.

9.   A transmitter as claimed in claim 7 or 8, wherein the data items constitute information about television programmes to be broadcast.

10   10.   A receiver for receiving and processing a plurality of data items from a transmitter, comprising the steps of:

means for receiving a field indicating the number of data items;

means for receiving the plurality of data items, each item including an identifier;

15   means for comparing the number of received data items with the number indicated by the received field to determine whether all data items have been received;

characterized in that the field indicating the number of data items comprises a first and a second subfield, said subfields representing the range of an ordered sequence of identifiers, the receiver further comprising means for checking whether and which identifiers

20   within said range are missing so as to determine which data items have not yet been received.

11.   A receiver as claimed in claim 10, wherein the subfields are modulo-N numbers, where N is the maximum number of data items.

12.   A receiver as claimed in claim 10 or 11, wherein the data items constitute

25   information about television programmes to be broadcast.

13.   A data signal comprising a plurality of data items, comprising:

a field indicating the number of data items;

the plurality of data items, each item including an identifier;

characterized in that the plurality of identifiers form an ordered sequence, and

30   in that the field indicating the number of data items comprises a first and a second subfield, said subfields representing the range of said sequence of identifiers.

14.   A signal as claimed in claim 13, wherein the subfields are modulo-N numbers, where N is the maximum number of data items.

15.   A signal as claimed in claim 13 or 14, wherein the data items constitute information about television programmes to be broadcast.